Children and Family Assessments

5 Minute Facts

What is it?

The Children and Family Assessment is the assessment tool that is used for all children's assessments by Bolton Staying Safe Division within Children's Services.

The Children and Family Assessment is undertaken following a referral to Staying Safe Division if the threshold is met for an assessment. This will include assessments of Children in Need, Child Protection Assessments, Pre-birth Assessments and the assessment presented to court when the Local Authority is applying for an order for the child to become looked after.

Why do we complete this assessment?

The Children and Family Assessment is a model that fits well with the principles in Working Together to Safeguard Children. The Children and Family Assessment is a continuing process that is focused on the needs of the child. The Children and Family Assessment is usually undertaken by a social worker with the child and family.

How does a Children and Family Assessment start?

In most circumstances an Early Help Assessment is the starting point of a Children and Family Assessment. The Early Help Assessment is used by the social work team to decide if a Children and Family Assessment is needed. The Children and Family Assessment is a more detailed thorough assessment of a child's needs so the Early Help Assessment is built on and developed. This means we do not 'start again' and the child and family do not have to talk about the same things to a different professional.

What happens during a Children and Family Assessment?

Once the decision is made that a Children and Family Assessment will be carried out, the social worker will make arrangements to spend time with the parents/carers and child. The social worker will also talk to other people, either a professional or important family member or representative to complete the assessment. All of this information will help the social worker analyse the needs of the child and decide on an action plan. The views of the child and family should run throughout the assessment and a copy of the assessment will be shared with the parents/carers and child if of an appropriate age and understanding.

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How long does it take?
Once a decision has been made that an assessment will be carried out, it usually takes 15 working days. However if a more detailed assessment is needed then this will take no longer than 45 days.

What are the benefits?

The assessment will look at the whole family so family members are not subjected to a number of different assessments by social workers.

The assessment is pre-populated from existing information already held on the Integrated Children's System (ICS). This saves time and means that social workers can update information easily onto the Assessment Form.

For more information...

Please contact Bolton Safeguarding Children Board at **www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk**

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Email: **boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk**

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